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At the Theatres.



Without an exception, *Fedora* is the strongest drama that has been presented to the judgment of New York in a dozen years. On Monday night, at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, it created a genuine *furore*, Fanny Davenport duplicating the triumphs of Bernhardt in Paris and Mrs. Bernard-Beebe in London. The verdict was immediate, decisive and unequivocally favorable. There was a distinguished audience present, *Fedora* having drawn scores of theatrical and society notables to its *premier*. It is seldom that a combination theatre like the Fourteenth Street is the scene of a first-night gathering which, in point of brilliance, eclipses a similar occasion at Wallack's or the Union Square.

Fedora is a play of the very highest rank. In construction, plot, dialogue and *ustof* it exhibits the work of a master mind. The story is treated boldly and originally; the ingenuity, skill and cunning of a wonderful brain like Sardou's alone could mould the conflicting materials with which it is built into complete, congruous and fascinating shape. From the moment that the central figure appears upon the scene, the interest is strangely absorbing, the spectator, caught in the whirlwind of passion which sweeps through the play, sitting riveted with breathless attention until the fall of the final curtain. It is seldom that one is made sensible of the hush that sometimes permeates an audience, but during the greater part of this performance, so remarkable was the effect of the tension to which the emotions of those present were put, one could feel it.

The story, in brief, is as follows: The Princess Fedora Romanoff, a Russian widow of fine personal charms, is engaged to Vladimir, son of the head of the Petersburg police. After a ball she returns home at a late hour to her palace. Her *fiancé*, who was to have accompanied her, does not put in an appearance, and she is filled with apprehensions for his safety. Her anxiety is justified by the entrance of a police agent, who precedes attendants bearing Vladimir, who has been mortally wounded, it is supposed, by Nihilists. The young man dies without recovering his senses, and Fedora swears to avenge her lover's death. Suspicion falls upon Boris Ipanoff, who makes his escape to Paris. Fedora follows him there and sets out to draw a confession of the crime from his lips by causing him to love her. The ruse succeeds. Boris relates the story of Vladimir's assassination, but proves conclusively that in killing Fedora's intended husband he was also destroying the despoiler of his (Ipanoff's) wife. The Princess experiences a revulsion of feeling toward Boris. Fearing that Russian spies and detectives whom she has set on his track and who are waiting outside to apprehend will seize and abduct the man for whom she has conceived a passion as violent as the hate that preceded it, Fedora implores him to remain even at the price of her reputation. The lover yields and the curtain falls on a dramatic and startling tableau.

The last act takes place a few days after the consummation of Fedora and Loris' love. The latter finds that a spy has denounced him and his family as Nihilists, his brother has been executed, his mother killed by the shock and his property confiscated. Fedora recognizes in these events the weight of her own hand when her heart was filled with hate for the man who had slain Vladimir. Loris tells her that he will soon be able to take revenge upon the spy who has denounced him, for he momentarily expects a letter from a friend which will make known her name. Racked with alternate love, remorse and fear, Fedora takes poison, confesses all to Loris, and dies after having obtained his pardon.

From this brief and scarcely adequate description it will be seen that Sardou deals with an intensely powerful subject. The character of Fedora is drawn as only a Frenchman could draw it. It forms a strange and fascinating study. Fedora is a creature of strong passions; resolute yet impetuous, capable of great hate and greater love. Indeed, the very savageness of both feelings in this Russian woman's breast gives them something in common. Her love and pity for the murdered Vladimir vanishes completely when she learns of his perjury from the lips of his slayer. She does not shed tears of bitterness or regret. She opens her heart at once to the man on whom all the detestation she was capable of had been centred. A woman of impulse and fire. By no tenderness or sacrifice does she win our sympathy. By no act of mercy or self-obliteration does she evoke our admiration. It is her boldness, her faculty for executing great resolves promptly and unswervingly, that fascinates us. She is a fatalist; a woman without doubt. Passion is the mainspring of her existence; but it is not altogether estranged from the companionship of reason. Hear

and brain are combined in a wonderful manner. Good instincts overbalance the bad. Her philosophy is summed up in the conviction that what is is, and what is to be cannot be helped. She stands on the brink of an abyss, and, true to her creed, makes no effort to shrink back. When the lover on whom she has brought ruin and desolation turns upon her, she kills herself, not from cowardice, but because that is the only way out of the difficulty.

Sardou has performed his work with infinite skill. The first act is interesting, the second exciting, the third thrilling and the fourth startling. From the rising of the curtain on the first act the story gradually increases in interest until the tragic climax brings the piece to a close. The manner in which the true episode of Vladimir's murder is concealed until the third act is extremely clever, the audience being kept in ignorance of the real facts up to that point, they having followed, with Fedora, the false clue that imputed Lorin's crime to political motives. The dialogue is terse, epigrammatic and vigorous. Every speech is pithy and every line has weight. The lustre of the original is no doubt somewhat impaired in the translation, but it has not been obscured. The opening scene of the first act is too talky for an American audience. Miss Davenport would do well to prune it down. With the rest of the drama we have positively no fault to find. It is the best work that has been done by the best French dramatist of the age, and that is as high praise as can be awarded. The people were very deeply impressed with the piece—its plot and treatment—giving immediate recognition of its sterling worth.

Miss Davenport eclipsed all her former efforts. She fairly outdid herself, and proved beyond a doubt that those who have all along had faith in her capability for strongly dramatic parts were right in their estimate. She acted with rare discernment, perfect intelligence, and was apparently mistress of all the requirements of the very arduous role. It was evident that the half year the actress has devoted to a study of the character had been profitably spent, for every speech she uttered, each gesture she made and every attitude she assumed signified careful preparation and well-directed thought. It was a splendidly conceived, magnificently executed impersonation that thrilled and electrified every person that witnessed it.

In the first act the nervousness naturally present on such occasions prevented Miss Davenport from taking full advantage of her opportunities. However, she gave some very neat by-play during the earlier part, and later, when Fedora finds her lover dead, her grief and anguish touched a responsive chord in the observer's heart. During the scene with Loris in the second act the star did some very subtle and delicate work. The effort to conceal her repugnance to Vladimir's assassin in order to lure him on by erotic devices to a confession of his guilt was genuinely artistic acting. The scene in the succeeding act, wherein Fedora discovers Vladimir's treachery and acknowledges her love for Loris, Miss Davenport played grandly. For this, as for other successful efforts earlier in the evening, she received an enthusiastic summons before the curtain—which mark of approbation, coming from an unusually critical gathering, on this occasion meant much more than it usually does. The death of Fedora was highly dramatic, albeit a trifle ghastly. Bernhardt, who is famed for these mortuary exhibitions, certainly could not have made it more realistic.

Miss Davenport's dresses were models in beauty of design, "fit" and appropriateness. It has become the fashion to decry fine dressing on the stage, but in this case to compliment the actress on her exquisite gowns does not mean that she has given them undue prominence, or that the attractiveness of her remarkable personation in any degree depended upon what she wore. Physically, she has improved since she last appeared before a New York audience. Formerly inclined to *emboîpoint*, she is now slender, lithe and graceful as any one could wish, and her face has increased in comeliness as her figure has decreased in size. Flowers in profusion were sent to her over the footlights.

The company gave the star capital support, and did justice to the subordinate roles in Sardou's great play. R. B. Mantell played Lord Ipanoff with a good deal of power. The recital of the murder of Vladimir, the avowal of his love for Fedora, and the grief at hearing of his mother's death, were special features of this actor's representation which met with the warm approval of the audience, and merit particular commendation. Mr. Mantell we have seen before, when he did not strike us so favorably, but he proved on Monday night that he has in him the making of a valuable leading man.

Ada Monk as the Countess Olga, a fast, an fantastic coquette, was admirable. She developed the humor and character of the part thoroughly, and lent merit to the lighter passages of the play. E. A. McDowell acted Jean Sereux, a trusty friend to be heroic, with praiseworthy discrimination. He is a good, reliable actor. S. C. Dubois, as Pierre Baroff, an explosive Russian, and Spencer Harrison as Rouel, a *commens*, were quite as good as small parts enabled them to be. Eugene Jepson played the detective Gretch nicely. This actor showed how much could be done with a minor part by doing it naturally and unobtrusively. Edward Warren played Desir, excellently. His correct enunciation

of French words was an anal treat. This young man has made rapid progress. When we first saw him he gave no indication of talent, but he has evolved from an indifferent amateur into a finished actor. Lucy Pitley did *Disintri* very well. A number of other people played small characters intelligently. The dresses were notably good, and the scenery—for the *Fourteenth Street Theatre*—exceptionally showy.

There have been many unsuccessful productions since the beginning of the season, and it is, therefore, with double satisfaction that THE MINXON chronicles the triumph of Fedora and the success of Fanny Davenport in the title rôle. The representation would easily run a hundred nights to large houses, but the engagement is limited to four weeks, at the expiration of which time the play will be taken on the road. The theatre-going provincials have a real treat in store.

Masks and Faces, especially put on to introduce John Hownson to his new position, was presented at Wallack's Monday night, when the regular season at this theatre began. There was a large attendance and the performance met with many indications of favor, Mr. Hownson as Triplet receiving a kindly greeting and the favorite members of the company, identified with the house for several seasons, being welcomed with affectionate applause as one after another appeared on the scene.

The play by Tom Taylor and Charles Reade is well known to the older generation of playgoers, but not familiar to many of the younger brood. Old-fashioned and quiet as it is, it contains many elements to make its occasional revival, by a competent company, desirable. The pithiness of the dialogue and the varied collection of distinct characters it presents are its principal charms.

As Triplett Mr. Howson emphatically and affirmatively settled the question of his fitness for legitimate dramatic work. His long and successful career in comic opera has not blunted his keen artistic instinct nor broadened his style overmuch. The quaintly humorous and delicately pathetic character in his hands obtained admirable treatment, and the audience by frequent applause evinced not only their complete satisfaction with Mr. Wallack's latest acquisition, but their delight with the impersonation of his initial part. In Howson the theatre has got not only a comedian but a true artist, an artist who can play any line of business that may be assigned him from leading parts down to low comedy characters. He will doubtless prove invaluable to the management. The realms of comic opera have lost a shining light, but the dramatic stage has reclaimed as its own a sterling actor.

Miss Coghlan was not happy in the part of merry, generous-hearted Peg Woffington. She lacked spontaneity and feeling, and her failure to make a favorable impression may be ascribed to her want of sympathy with the character. Wilmot Eyre's Pomander was good enough, and Gerald Eyre's Vane was better. Dan Leeson's Cibber and Mr. Gynette's Quin were equally meritorious. Messrs. Edwin and Buckstone as Snail and Souper were capital. Miss Elliott made a winning Kitty Clive and little Miss Measor's Mabel Vane was very charming.

Soon Moths will be produced. Then *The Road to Ruin* is to be revived, and after that *Impulse* (an English adaptation of *La Maison du Mari*) is to be done.

Pink Dominos as played by the Wyndham company at the Union Square has met with such a great degree of favor that it will be kept on until the end of the engagement next Saturday night. It was Mr. Wyndham's intention to play several comedies besides the two that have been acted during the past few weeks, but the public have rushed to see the Dominos so eagerly that The Lancers, Butterfly Fever, and Fourteen Days have had to be shelved for a future time. Next Monday, Jefferson will appear at this theatre as Caleb Plummer in The Cricket on the Hearth, and Golithely, in Lend Me Five Shillings. It is quite a long time since the famous comedian has acted these parts in this city, and his admirers have reason to feel grateful that he has forsaken the perennial Rip for this engagement at least.

Never have we enjoyed a performance more than that of *Dieuorçons*, by Mlle. Aimée and Grau's French Opera company, on Monday night, at the Fifth Avenue. Of course, from M. Mezieres we expected a great performance of M. des Prunelles, and truly we got what we expected, and much more. This great artist's

make-up as one of the *bonne bourgeoisie* was a picture, a study of simulation, and his acting was perfect. Aimée was so supremely excellent as Cyprienne, that we are surprised that she does not accept the loss of her voice as a gain, and use one fan as a consolation of the highest order. From beginning to end her acting, her dressing and her personal appearance were faultless. We should like hugely to see any of our best opera-buffe artists attempt to comely such as *Divorcé*—or, say, *The School for Scandal* cast thus:

Lady Carlisle.....	Lily Post.
Mrs. Carlisle.....	Miss De-Rayther.
Lady Selwyn.....	Jeanne Watson.
Sir Peter Selwyn.....	Mr. Wilson.
Charles Selwyn.....	Mr. Bull.
Charles Selwyn.....	Mr. Taylor.

What wild work would they make of it? Or fancy Carleton as Charles! And here a comic opera company of French people drop their music and give a performance.

pure comedy absolutely unequalled. So much for learning and minding one's business. Too much honor cannot be given to Mr. Lary, the *lancer* lawyer—first for accepting the part of the waiter Joseph, and second, for playing it so admirably.

The Florences have not been very successful of late seasons in getting hold of new dramatic material to replace their old stock. *Facts*; or, *His Little Hatchet*, by George H. Jessop and William Gill, is a rather strained effort in the fun-making line. An exaggerating American (Florence), an impossible Englishwoman (Mrs. Florence) with a note book, a villainous English officer, an English tourist with an eye-glass, a young lawyer and his neglected wife, a scheming widow and a chipper American girl make up the characters. Pinto Perkins, the American liar, with his personal experiences, a *la* Munchausen, imposes upon the Englishwoman, who jots down his "whoppers" in her note-book for use in a forthcoming book. Florence is funny at times as the liar, but his constant "That reminds me," etc., becomes monotonous. Miss Matilda Starr, his victim, was as gorgeous a creature as Mrs. Florence's well-known costuming could make her. Her unctuous speech and liberal quotations from her own poems moved the audience to convulsive mirth. Earle Stirling's English swell, Hon. Beverly Outram, was a pleasing performance—nothing over. Perkins' daughter, Stella, an American girl, in love with Outram, was nicely played by Stella Vaughn. The other characters were in indifferent hands.

The treacherous widow is baffled; the neglected wife is stopped on the eve of eloping with the bad English Captain; Pinto Perkins accepts Outram as a son-in-law, and in turn successfully woos the English authoress, and ceases his lying. The stars were much applauded and often recalled, but the spontaneous enthusiasm that marks a success was lacking. The Grand Opera House was well-filled on Monday night, and Facts may pull well through the week. Next week, Eileen Oge.

Forty-nine introduced the Rankins at their new theatre on Third avenue, Monday evening. The performances derive additional interest from the fact that they are the last these popular actors will give in this play, having disposed of the right to act it to other parties. Mr. Rankin as Old '49 and Kitty Blanchard as Carrots delighted the large audience and won abundant applause. The support, especially in the cases of Fred Lotto as the Colonel and Percy Rede in the leading part, was excellent. Next week farewell representations of *The Danites* will be given.

Charlotte Thompson presented the New Jane Eyre, Saturday night, to a fair house. The heroine of Miss Bronte's story was admirably personated by the star, and the company rendered creditable assistance. Chaos reigns at the Twenty-third Street Theatre, which has reverted to the proprietors, and under the circumstances good business can scarcely be looked for.

Herne's Hearts of Oak, which has become a permanent attraction cropping up every season, was presented at the Windsor Monday evening and interested a large house. So often have we reviewed this production, it is now only necessary to say that it has lost nothing in attractiveness, although since its first presentation sufficient time has elapsed to wear the novelty off any piece of ordinary merit.

Emmet's popularity continues unabated. On Monday night at the People's every seat was sold before eight o'clock, and Tuesday evening crowds were turned away. Fritz in Ireland kept the audience amused and the star's singing and dancing were encored. The company is better than that of last season. George Sprague, Maurice Pike and Kate Blanche are deserving of special notice. The engagement will be a highly profitable one.

The San Francisco are giving a screaming burlesque on Excelsior at their comfortable Opera House this week. The other features of the show are capital and the house is nightly filled to overflowing.

Good houses still attend the performances of *The Rajah*, apparently no amount of strong counter-attraction affecting the business of the fortunate Madison Square. The delightful comedy repays frequent visitation, for its charms are of that order which increase on acquaintance.

The receipts of the Comique attest the popularity of the second revival of Harrigan and Hart successes. The Mulligan Guard Picnic furnishes enjoyment worth several times the price of a seat. Unlike most reproductions, this one has lost nothing in freshness. The fun is as diverting as ever, and the music, both old and new, as captivating. At present the Comique is the only really American theatre in the city except the Madison Square, and its continued success is therefore in a double sense gratifying.

The most wonderful exhibition of the age is Professor George Bartholomew's Equine Paradox, which was presented to a large house at the Cosmopolitan Theatre Monday night. The marvellous intelligence of these animals, developed with extraordinary skill, is

ailing patience by their trainer, cannot fail to evoke wonder and admiration from all who come to see them. People who advocate the theory that beasts are sentient beings certainly can deduce arguments in support of their claim from the performances of these educated horses. Henry Beigh was among the spectators Monday night, and his severe visage relaxed into pleasant smiles whenever the animals did some unusually clever act.

The precision and discipline of the horses is perfect. They never make mistakes, but go through their races reliably, and when applauded—as they generally are—they solemnly approach the footlights, of their own volition, and acknowledge the compliment by politely bowing. Indeed, the equines are real actors, who do everything but reply to their manager's commands. Furthermore they work for love, as they have never even demanded salary. It would require fully a column to describe even briefly the tricks performed by Professor Bartholomew's pupils. They play leap-frog, attend school, arrange themselves in tableaux, hold court, illustrate camp-life and fight a sham battle, besides doing a score of other things equally diverting.

For novelty and merit the Paradox is decidedly the best exhibition of an equestrian kind before the public. The innocent, healthy enjoyment it provides should particularly attract ladies and children. The matinees on Wednesdays and Saturdays should draw them out in full force.

Excelsior goes on to applauding through at Niblo's. The production is perfect, except in the matter of scenery. However, the ballet is so good as to make up for this deficiency.—Vin at Tony Pastor's will hold the stage only one week longer. Then there is to be a change for something better in the reappearance of Pastor's own unequalled specialty troupe.—Francesca da Rimini is having very fair houses at the Star. The fiftieth performance will be reached next week.

The Musical Mirror.



The Casino is doing excellent well with Prince Methusalem, and Mr. Hill's strict discipline with all the artists, whether principal singers, orchestra or chorus, is telling admirably. Mr. Maffin has resumed his part of Cyprian, and Mr. Bell has taken that of Volcario, why or wherefore we cannot say, as it was very well played by Mr. Dowd, and Mr. Bell certainly has a claim to better things. Misses Winston and Carson are as acceptable as always in their parts of Prince Methusalem and Princess Pulcinella, and Mr. Wilson is as funny as it is well possible to be in Duke Sigismund. We would suggest that the Italian paper money is in the plural *lire*, not *liras*, and recommend that the rectilinear system of stage drilling be abandoned in favor of grouping. People do not stand in a line in real life, except at the post-office or box-office or in the army. Why should they do so on the stage? Break up into groups the chorus and be picturesque.

The Merry Duchess is running neck and neck with her opponents, and no doubt will in the end make a drawn race. The stage management is the strong point at this theatre and Mr. Barker is a jewel. The musical side of the entertainment is very good, and the orchestra, above all, is to be commended. Mr. Never we have always looked upon as a really good conductor. The chorus is well voiced, well taught, well dressed and well looking. What would we more?

The Celtic Music Festival is postponed, and will take place on Monday next. Did anything or anybody blow up? Better a postponement than an explosion. Seriously, the undertaking is a very laudable one, and if anything Irish can ever hold together long enough to achieve anything this ought to. The originator of the whole, Mr. Murphy is a young man of talent, enterprise and, for an Irishman, cool judgment, and if any one can guide such kittle folk as Celtic unions are mostly made up of, he is the man to do it.

The Sunday night concert at the Casino drew a good house and the performance went very well. To be sure, the singers of the French opera company show far better advantage on the stage than in the concert room, but such artists as Mile, Nixau and Mile. Angele would shine anywhere. The orchestral part was much as usual, and the audience was well pleased. Mr. Aronson may congratulate himself on having originated an entertainment and a theatre that has caught on once and for ever the fickle fancy of the public.

We hear from reliable sources that the opera

The Usher.



Blank Palmer, as I predicted, has failed to impress such London critics as ventured to imagine to see her show at the Grand. She is a little bundle of affectations. I should like to know how the festive John R. will get over this verdict?

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It is seldom that a play is received by the critics in this city with unanimous approval, but the verdict in the case of Fedora is unequivocal—there has not been one dissenting voice. I am glad that Fanny Davenport has proved so heavily, for she is a truly American actress—a genuine product of the American stage. If she does not make a fortune with Sardou's piece I am greatly mistaken.

Just before the performance Monday Miss Davenport received a harbinger of good luck in the form of a letter from Sardou, expressing confidence in her ability to make his play a success, and empowering her to emphatically deny, on his authority, that Fedora owes its existence in any way whatsoever to Belot's *Drame de la Rue de la Paix*. In this connection, it is worthy of note that in Paris, where both authors and both plots are equally well known, no accusations have been preferred against Sardou. The story was started here by mischievous meddlers, who were unwilling to allow Miss Davenport to present the play she bought without circulating malicious stories insinuating plagiarism that has not yet been discovered in Paris, where Fedora has been running for months.

On Tuesday Miss Davenport had the satisfaction of answering Sardou's kindly letter by a cablegram announcing the success of his play the night before.

I was much amused to observe a gathering of violent anglo-maniacs in the lobby of the Fourteenth Street, between the acts. There were Ebenezer Plympton (who wore an extraordinary garment combining overcoat—cut blue—and braided cape), Clinton Stuart, Walden Ramsey and one or two others of the same ilk, in a group. All these nice creatures used to be Americans, but judging simply from their attire and conversation I should be inclined to own any of them as countrymen of mine now. Oblivious of the fact that they are caricatures, they stood together smoking the knobs on their canes or smoking *Lafumee*, and from their midst proceeded, in the most atrociously Cockney accent, such terms of endearment as "dear boy," "don't you know," "old chaps," "well, Cocky," and a string of imported epithets and adjectives that would form a good-sized dictionary. I collected and printed. It is monstrous that one cannot go to any public place without encountering creatures of this class. They affront the eye with their absurd dress, and offend the ear with their murdering English. A blonde Briton is always good to run across, for the travesties that wear imitation English clothes and talk with an imitation English accent are positively disgusting. Thank Heaven! the profession is not tainted with many of 'em, and the few that do belong to it are not actors.

It is the opinion of those versed in the theatre that there are neither Dollars nor Sense in the piece, which Daly brought out Tuesday night.

The Upward March.

In noting the changes that have taken place in New York in the last quarter of a century, there is nothing so striking as the increase in the number of theatres and places of amusement, and the steady and upward march of the theatrical centre. When Wallack's Theatre stood on the corner of Broome street and Broadway; when Forrest held the boards once or twice each season at the Broadway Theatre, still farther down town; when Madame Ponisi, who supported the great tragedian, was the first leading lady in the profession; when Julia Dean occupied the place now held by Mary Anderson; when Matilda Heron played *Camille* in a style which has not been equalled since; when Rachel appeared in the *Winter Garden*; and when Niblo's Garden was the usual point of the theatrical circle—if any one had predicted that in a little more than two decades the theatrical field would extend as far up town as Forty-first street, he would

have been regarded as a prophet of the highly imaginative school.

When the Union Square was built, and when Wallack's, now the *Star*, was transplanted to its new quarters, it was supposed that the upward march would cease for another quarter century. Booth's, the Grand Opera House and Wood's Museum (first called Barnard's), where Daly's now stands, and Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre, were the pioneers of the new departure. The first-named was a failure; the Grand Opera House lost money steadily for several seasons; the Fifth Avenue was destroyed by fire, and Wood's Museum never caught the tide of success until Daly took it in hand. But now how the scene has changed. Between Twenty-third and Forty-first streets we have the Madison Square Theatre, Wallack's, Daly's, the Bijou, the Fifth Avenue, the Casino, the Metropolitan Opera House and the Cosmopolitan. This, then, is the theatrical centre at the present time. And these houses, for the most part, do a flourishing business.

The Irving Sale.

A constant stream of people passed before the window in the box-office at the *Star* Theatre yesterday, and the treasurer was kept busy changing money and passing out tickets for the Irving performances. The sale began at nine in the morning and lasted until five in the afternoon. The small army of men, paid by the speculators, who had been bivouacking at the entrance of the theatre since Saturday night, were, of course, the first on hand and got the best choice of seats. Many seats were bought by people who intend to see the English tragedian, but the majority went into the hands of the speculators.

A MIRROR representative ascertained from the box office-keeper, after the sale for the day had finished, that altogether \$39,660 had been received.

New Plays.

It would occupy considerable space to give a complete list of the new plays now being produced, prepared, or under consideration during the present season. Aside from the imported melodramas, comic operas and adaptations, we have many by native authors, or those resident on American soil. Among them at random we can mention: *Fashion*, *The Blue and the Gray*, *Elsie Deane*, *Facts*, *Romanoff*, *Courage*, *Dollars and Sense*, *Belmont's Bride*, *An American Marriage*, *Galbo*, *Memories*, *The Old, Old Story*, *A Wife's Honor*, *The New Flying Dutchman*, *Kentuck*, *Namadero*, *Two Marriages*, and many others. Nearly all the native playwrights and dramatists are at work. Bartley Campbell has submitted a new comedy to a leading theatre, and several important revivals of American plays have been successful. Translations and foreign plays can be named by the dozen, and operas are no way behind. Surely, out of such quantity we may expect to see some quality.

Actors Scarce in 'Frisco.

Osmond Tearle arrived on Sunday from San Francisco, looking none the worse for his long trip. "I went back," said he, "after the tour of the Wallack company ended, from Chicago to 'Frisco to play a week's engagement in *The Strangers of Paris*. In this piece I made a hit out there a couple of years ago, and the manager of the California Theatre offered me a handsome certainty to come out and repeat it. He was to get up the piece, engaging the company.

"When I arrived in 'Frisco I found things at a standstill on account of the inability of Manager Bert to secure actors. Strange as it may seem (for they have always hitherto been as plenty as blackberries on the Slope), he could not get together enough people to cast the play. So the production had to be abandoned. Manager Bert treated me very well, and compromised my claim for a good sum. Then I came back East."

Mr. Tearle will create the leading part in *Moths at Wallack's* Monday week.

George Vandenhoff's Return.

A fortnight ago THE MIRROR stated that George Vandenhoff, the well-known actor, reader, lecturer and elocutionist, contemplated returning to this country and resuming professional work. Intelligence has just reached us that Mr. Vandenhoff sailed from Liverpool on September 25, by the *City of Rome*, and will arrive in New York the latter part of this week.

For the past three years Mr. Vandenhoff has been in England in retirement. He had intended to quit professional work entirely, but he now finds silence wearisome, and as he is as capable of work as ever, he will establish himself again in New York, receiving pupils in acting and elocution, and, perhaps, filling such theatrical engagements as come in his way. This should be good news for histrionic aspirants, inasmuch as Vandenhoff is not alone the best dramatic teacher living, but the only one qualified to prepare people thoroughly and systematically for the stage. He is a man of splendid attainments—a scholar as well as gentleman and actor.

He was Mary Anderson's first and only instructor in speech and action. By the recommendation of Charlotte Cushman she came to New York from St. Louis to receive his advice

and instruction. He directed her in her earliest studies. As a rule Van Vandenhoff does not believe in self-styled teachers of acting, but it can heartily and honestly commend Mr. Vandenhoff as an instructor who can develop dramatic talent in pupils who possess the crude article in a sufficient degree, and whose rich store of practical experience, knowledge of theatrical tradition, usage and custom, joined to an admirable and correct plan of vocal culture, render his guidance invaluable to those studying for the stage.

The Rajah to Run Till Kins.

A MIRROR reporter had a long conversation with Dan Freeman at Madison Square on Tuesday. He spoke as follows:

"Our travelling companies have all commenced to good business, and promise to continue it. They are all equipped in the best manner, both with scenery and actors. We have undoubtedly some of the best comedy talent in the country. We have arranged with Messrs. Allison and Rignold to produce all our pieces in Australia and New Zealand. They are desirous of securing several artists in our ranks who have made successes in various parts in this country, but we have not yet decided to part with them.

"The Rajah will run until Christmas despite any rumor to the contrary. Many of the reports issued about our affairs are false. It has been playing to big business, although all the other theatres are open. During the Summer months, when we had crowded houses, people said it was because no other theatres were running to compete with us. The Rajah is a strong and popular play. Mr. Marsden's play will not follow it. Pending necessary changes by the author of *Elsie Deane* in the latter play, we shall produce another comedy. We have not yet decided what it shall be. We have three under consideration, and each and all of them are strong and of almost equal excellence. But ere a new play is presented many numbers of THE MIRROR will have been printed and read. Mr. Marsden's play is not in such a shape that I can give any idea of its plot as yet. Our intentions regarding a theatre in Boston are not yet matured."

Owens' Reappearance as a Star.

James R. Smith informed a MIRROR reporter on Tuesday that his firm (Slavin and Smith) had just concluded a contract with the veteran John E. Owens to star.

He said: "Our engagement of Owens is for a long period. He will open the season at Wilmington, Del., about the end of October, in a piece peculiarly suited to him, and he will be supported by a strong company, all of whom will have an opportunity in the play for character acting. The people now being engaged are Mrs. G. C. Germon, George Gordon, Edith Gordon, H. W. Gale and others. The piece has been tried, and we have filled time to Jan. 21, and are adding dates each day. We will play in Philadelphia during November, and then travel the Eastern circuit; afterward throughout the Union. In all probability we may arrange to go to England next season, but as yet it is undecided. Mr. Owens' reputation and popularity will insure prosperous business. We have other pieces in which he will appear."

The Kiralfys' Enterprises.

Bolossy Kiralfy was seen at his residence by a MIRROR reporter yesterday. He said, in reply to inquiries:

"We have been very fortunate in former seasons, but expect to eclipse them all by the present one. Our company on the road, which carries *The Black Crook* and *Enchantment*, playing them alternately every two weeks, has been filling the theatres. Excelsior, as you know, has succeeded beyond expectation, and endorses our judgment as caterers of the spectacular plays in this country. It is such a novelty to the great majority of the public that we feel justified in expecting a long run of it. Anyhow, the people are pleased, and in proof that we intend giving good value always, we have arranged a new ballet for Excelsior, having for this purpose brought Signora Carlotta Brinza from La Scala, Milan. She arrived Tuesday on the *Helvetia*, and is one of the most beautiful and talented dancers in the world. We have not determined the tour of Excelsior yet, as business is increasing and not falling off.

"About the 1st of May next year we commence the erection of our new theatre on Fourth Avenue. All the plans are ready, and the contracts signed. We consider (that is, my brother and myself) that New York can support a spectacular theatre as well as most European cities, and are confident it will pay. The difficulty with the ticket speculators at Niblo's is under examination, and in a day or two we will publish our statement."

The Dramatic Boom.

The auspicious opening of the season of 1893-94 gives a strong promise of prosperity. Never before have such tokens of success been visible. The financial triumphs of most of the attractions now playing in the city led a MIRROR reporter to visit the various box-offices and glean the opinion of the managers as to the probable result of the season in a pecuniary sense. Their report is more than encouraging—it is very gratifying.

Niblo's business is too well known now to need mention, while the Grand Opera House, the Windsor, Standard and Casino have been

glad to overflowing. On Monday night the People's volunteered to establishmen by turning people away at 8 o'clock. Harrison and Blat's success is proverbial. Wallack's, the Fourteenth Street, Daly's and the Fifth Avenue have booked large sales for some time to come, ensuring good runs for the opening season.

The Union Square is doing a good business, and the Madison Square turned people away on Saturday night.

The road ventures are reported generally as successful, and, considering all things, the revival of the legitimate, the improved public taste, the splendid edifices now devoted to the drama, and the enterprise of managers, the outlook promises to surpass the hopes of the most sanguine.

French Playwrights Stirred Up.

For several years the leading French dramatic authors have been considering how they could put a stop to the wholesale plagiarism of their best works in England and America. We understand that they have now formed an organization, with secretaries at Paris, London and New York who will deal directly with managers. Plays will be sold through the agency of these secretaries, or adapted under the superintendence of the French authors, whose name will be given on the play-bills in connection with the name of the adaptor. It is also intended to arrange for the adaptation of successful English and American plays for the American and French stages.

How this organization will prevent plagiarism, we do not understand; but as Sardou and Dumas are satisfied, there must be something more accomplished than the press states.

Unsuccessful Mendacity.

Last week, after the failure of *The Romanoff*, the manager of Charlotte Thompson sent circulars to the critics announcing that the piece would be withdrawn and Jane Eyre substituted. The reason given for this very sensible proceeding was that "Miss Thompson accepted the verdict of the New York press in regard to her new play, *The Romanoff*."

If the circular had said that Miss Thompson accepted the verdict of the New York public, as indicated by miserable business, it would have been nearer the truth.

As a matter of fact, a majority of the critics endorsed *The Romanoff* in unqualified terms. Except by THE MIRROR and one or two papers that make it a point to tell the truth, Mr. Saint Maur's trite and clumsy drama was received with unusual commendation. Of course there was a reason for this singular inclination to favor a bad play. To those who understand the inner workings of the theatre world, it is plain. They did not err through ignorance of their profession, but through blindness to duty and for purposes that to the initiated appeared malicious.

In doing their utmost to assist in palming off a wretched counterfeit of Fedora a number of the critics thought to gratify their personal dislike to Miss Fanny Davenport. They believed that by covering the spurious work with unjustifiable but cunningly laid on praise, they would boost Mr. Saint Maur's feeble imitation to success and thereby injure the prospects of Miss Davenport's property, Fedora. Of course the public found out the deception for themselves (as they always do), and despite the encomiums of the *Tribune*, *Times*, *World* and other newspapers, left *The Romanoff* to die the quick death it deserved.

This is only another instance of the impotence of the press when it is used for evil purposes. Time and again have we had proof here in New York that fulsome flattery cannot make a bad play successful, nor violent abuse force a good one into failure. Such mendacity as that illustrated by most of the *Romanoff* notices must rebound to the discredit of the critics who wrote them and the newspapers that printed them.

Heavy Receipts.

"Last week," said John A. Stevens to a MIRROR reporter, "my various attractions took in over \$17,000. Of the three attractions which drew these receipts two were plays from my pen. Yet there are some critics who say that my works are not popular. Perhaps they may not be classed with the highest form of dramatic literature, but they certainly possess magnetic qualities and attract the masses. That is just what I want. If I wrote a drama that pleased all the critics it wouldn't please anybody else. Dramatists, as well as other people, are after money."

"Have you settled your differences with the San Francisco journalists amicably?"

"Hess you, yes. The natchet has been buried, and I shall go back to California next Summer. The fight was only with two papers, all the rest treated me fairly. I did not object to honest criticism, but I didn't propose to sit still and take abuse from the *Examiner* and *Chronicle* without retaliating. However, everything is salubrious now. I like California; it has the best climate in the world. People who go to Europe to spend the Summer ought to be ashamed of themselves when there's a more accessible and infinitely more agreeable place to visit on their own continent. The San Francisco people are appreciative theatrically, and I found them socially to be hospitable to a fault. By the way, THE MIRROR, in speaking of my address to the people out there in reply to the attacks of the *Examiner*

and *Chronicle*, fell into a dangerous trap. The circular was sent out after the advertisement, and not before, as you stated."

"Has the business of the *World* been affected by the opening of the new season on the other side of the water?"

"Not at all. In fact, I can show by the books that our receipts have never been larger in the history of the business in New York during the past month. We have a large and distinct patronage which no opposition can take away."

Hotel Rates.

Members of committees are complaining that the hotels throughout the country are charging the prohibitive rates now demanded for the season. In many houses nearly any reduction is made, and in some no reduction is given unless the entire company put up at one hotel. Of course in the latter case the owner who holds good positions and receives high salaries has no cause for complaint, when they are asked to pay the ordinary rates. But the other people, who are the victims of exorbitant hotel charges, are doing their ordinary expenses, and the committees are complaining.

In nearly all domestic committees the members pay their own board-bills, the traveling and feeding of servants and other expenses are usually paid for by the managers, who choose exceptionally low rates on account of the large number of people they must cater for. With the committees it is different. The agent is always with the hotel, and knows what rates are given to particular parties. These are communicated to the company, the members of which are allowed to select their stopping-places. The fault of this plan is that the agent, who receives an additional pay for the time spent in this direction, and who knows that the management gets no benefit from the reduction of hotel prices, becomes careless and often goes himself to particular trouble in negotiating for favorable terms. Sometimes, too, there is bad luck in a town, when the agents are compelled to accept accommodations at whatever price may be demanded.

A way to avoid all this would be for the hotels to adopt certain fixed rates for the season, which managers could obtain about their usual upon application. The members of a company would then choose their stopping-places; know what they have to pay, and feel that their interests were secure from the carelessness and laziness of advance agents. Hotels take a very large amount of money from the profession annually, and their proprietors can well afford to make liberal terms and stick by them.

Excelsior in Paris and New York.

A gentleman who had just arrived from Paris told a MIRROR reporter yesterday: "Last night I saw Excelsior at Niblo's, where in a \$2.50 box for which I was obliged to pay \$3 to a speculator. Three weeks ago I witnessed a performance of the same spectacle at the Eden Theatre, Paris."

"In most respects the New York production is equally as good as the other one. I could see very little difference between the two ballets. That at Niblo's is quite as good in style, precision and general efficiency. It is certainly a very large amount of money from the profession annually, and their proprietors can well afford to make liberal terms and stick by them."

"One reason for the success of Excelsior created in Paris is the beauty and surroundings. The Eden is an Alhambra palace. The only theatre we have here that at all resembles it is the Casino, and that is a doll's house compared with it. The long *actes* there are rendered enjoyable by concerts given in several little halls which are adjacent to the theatre proper, and to enter which no extra admission is charged. In these cases and refreshments are to be had. The band that plays the music incidental to the performance is as large as is used for grand open houses, and composed of far better material; so this part of the show is an agreeable feature. I cannot say as much for the orchestra at Niblo's."

"On the whole, however, making due allowance for the inferiority of the house in which it is presented and excepting the scenery, New Yorkers have as good an Excelsior as the Parisians."

Changes at the Madison Square.

Next week George Clark will again fill the leading part in *The Rajah*. H. M. Pitt and Marion Elmore will go on the road, commencing in Philadelphia. The original glade scene goes also, but the play will remain unaltered. Marie Burroughs, Edith Leslie and the Whiffins continuing in the cast. Miss Burroughs, the society amateur of San Francisco, will play Gladys permanently from next Monday, having already made a success of the part. It is thought she will be an attractive addition to the Madison Square ranks. The management have already developed considerable amateur talent, among it being George Cayvan and Carrie Turner.

10

TELEGRAPHIC NEWS.

Franklin to us from Everywhere.

New Haven, Oct. 3.—Frank Mayo had a good house at the Casino Monday night, playing the well-known story of the "Lone Wolf." William Hall made his second visit here and is playing "Shylock" to a good business. His characterization is careful and scholarly. Little note falls to the house as it should. Tonight "Marked Men" and "Honor." C. B. Goss's co., which made a name at Jersey City last week, failed to open at the Grand. Sullivan's co. in "Moloney's Raffle" is playing to large business at the American.

Baltimore, Oct. 3.—Louis Harrison and John Gentry have caught on with their new play, "Shipped by the Light of the Moon." They opened a three nights engagement on Monday at the Grand, and the house was packed. The play is one of continuous fun and every point is brought out in such a manner as to be taken to heart.

Canton, Oct. 3.—McCullough opened his second week at McVicker's with "Virginia" to a crowded house. The White Slave is having fair patronage at Henry's. Good business at the Grand. The Opera Company at the Grand. Henry's Rye house large crowds to Henry's. W. J. Smith, in "Friend and Fox," draws full houses at the Academy. The Dances attractions are at the Olympic, and are doing an excellent business. Not a bad house at any of the theatres, including the variety on Monday night.

Detroit, Oct. 3.—Jannetich had an enthusiastic reception at the Detroit Opera House on the opening of her season. She presented her new play, "Zillah," to a very good house, and was frequently recalled. The Majestics, at White's, had an excellent house on Monday night and fair last night. Only fair business at the Treadwell at White's.

Mobile, Ala., Oct. 1.—The Frank Evans Acme company, in "The Silent Man," opened the Mobile season on Monday night. The attendance was only fair.

Pittsburgh, Oct. 3.—All the houses opened to large houses. The Grand Army of the Republic Re-union is in full blast, and the city is full of strangers.

Buffalo, Oct. 3.—Nothing extraordinary in the way of openings Monday night. The Silver King at the Academy attracted a good house. At White's, where Wellley and Sterling's company are representing The Danites, the attendance was rather light. The attractions at the Adelphi not being as strong as usual, the house is, for a wonder on a Monday night, not quite packed. Cappa's Seventh Regiment Band drew a large audience at the Music Hall on Tuesday.

Cincinnati, Oct. 3.—Manager Fennessy re-opened the Coliseum on Sunday night with "Curle in Samuel of Posen," to one of the best houses of the season. Business will be large throughout the week. Minnie Madden in "Juanita," at Havlin's, and the Colton-Tiffany Kentucky combination at Heuck's began their respective engagements same evening to well-filled houses. Keene's Richard III attracted a large Sunday night audience at the Grand, and while the star's portrayal of the villainous blackback differs essentially from that generally accepted as the standard rendition of the role, it is in no sense unsatisfactory. Franz Henschelle, Robert McDade's new play, with the author in the title role, was produced for the first time Monday evening, at Robinson's Opera House. The drama is in five acts, the scenes being alternately laid in Rondout, a village on the Hudson River, and New York City. The action of the play comprises a period of five years. McDade's thorough acquaintance with stage details is evidenced in his construction of the play, the interest being sustained until the final drop of the curtain, and his portrayal of the dual role can be classed as eminently satisfactory. W. H. Danvers last season with Oliver Doud Byron, was engaged, 30th, by Manager John Russell for the Carrot's combination.

The Beggar Student Postponed.

Last night Edward Aronson said to a Mirror man: "Miss Almé will sing at the next Sunday concert at the Casino, in conjunction with Angela, Nissa, Nigri. It will be her first appearance at these concerts. It is under consideration that the Princess of Treblonde will be done again before the Beggar Student, in order that the latter may be placed before the public in the best possible manner. The Princess will be presented by the same people that are now playing in Prince Methusalem."

PEOPLE'S THEATRE.
Henry, opposite Spring Street.
Sole Proprietor and Manager
George F. Kimes

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Samuel's New Songs and Dances.

THE HANDSOMEST THEATRE IN THE CITY.
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